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Frye, Joshua; Suchan, Macy

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Nobel peace speech

Associate Professor Joshua FRYE
Humboldt State University
USA
Joshua.Frye@humboldt.edu

Macy SUCHAN
Humboldt State University
USA
mks532@humboldt.edu

Abstract: The Nobel Peace Prize has long been considered the premier peace prize in the world. According to Geir Lundestad, Secretary of the Nobel Committee, of the 300 some peace prizes awarded worldwide, “none is in any way as well known and as highly respected as the Nobel Peace Prize” (Lundestad, 2001). Nobel peace speech is a unique and significant international site of public discourse committed to articulating the universal grammar of peace. Spanning over 100 years of sociopolitical history on the world stage, Nobel Peace Laureates richly represent an important cross-section of domestic and international issues increasingly germane to many publics. Communication scholars’ interest in this rhetorical genre has increased in the past decade. Yet, the norm has been to analyze a single speech artifact from a prestigious or controversial winner rather than examine the collection of speeches for generic commonalities of import. In this essay, we analyze the discourse of Nobel peace speech inductively and argue that the organizing principle of the Nobel peace speech genre is the repetitive form of normative liberal principles and values that function as rhetorical *topoi*. These *topoi* include freedom and justice and appeal to the inviolable, inborn right of human beings to exercise certain political and civil liberties and the expectation of equality of protection from totalitarian and tyrannical abuses. The significance of this essay to contemporary communication theory is to expand our theoretical understanding of rhetoric’s role in the maintenance and development of an international and cross-cultural vocabulary for the grammar of peace.

Keywords: Nobel Peace Prize, value appeals, normative liberalism, hero myth, repetitive form

Le discours de Nobel de la paix

Résumé : Le prix Nobel de la paix a longtemps été considéré comme le premier prix de la paix au monde. Selon Geir Lundestad, secrétaire du Comité Nobel, sur les 300 prix de la paix décernés dans le monde entier, « aucun n'est ni connu ni respecté comme le prix Nobel de la paix » (Lundestad, 2001). Le discours Nobel de la paix est un terrain international unique et important de discours public engagé dans l'articulation de la grammaire universelle de la paix. Au cours de plus de 100 ans d'histoire sociopolitique sur la scène mondiale, les lauréats du prix Nobel de la paix représentent un échantillon important de problématiques nationales et internationales de plus en plus fréquentes pour de nombreux publics. L'intérêt des chercheurs en communication dans ce genre rhétorique a augmenté au cours de la dernière décennie. Néanmoins, la norme a été d'analyser un discours unique d'un gagnant prestigieux ou controversé plutôt que d'examiner une collection de discours afin de mettre en exergue les points communs génériques. Dans cet article, nous analysons inductivement le discours du prix Nobel de paix en soutenant l'hypothèse que le principe organisateur du genre du discours de Nobel de la paix est un groupe de valeurs du libéralisme normatif qui fonctionnent comme *topoi* rhétorique. Ces *topoi* incluent la liberté et la justice et font appel au droit invincible et inné des êtres humains d'exercer certaines libertés politiques et civiles et l'attente de l'égalité de protection contre les abus totalitaires et tyranniques. La signification de cet essai pour la théorie de la communication contemporaine consiste à élargir notre compréhension théorique du rôle de la rhétorique dans le maintien et le développement d'un vocabulaire international et interculturel pour une grammaire de la paix.

Mots-clés : prix Nobel de la paix, attraction des valeurs, libéralisme normatif, mythe héroïque, forme répétitive

Introduction

The Nobel peace prize has long been considered the premier peace prize in the world. According to Geir Lundestad, former Secretary of the Nobel Committee, of the 300 some peace prizes awarded worldwide, “none is in any way as well known and as highly respected as the Nobel Peace Prize” (Lundestad, 2001). The very first Nobel Peace Prize was awarded in 1901; spanning over 100 years of sociopolitical history on the world stage, Nobel Peace Laureates richly represent an important cross-section of domestic and international issues increasingly germane to many publics as is evidenced by Kofi Annan’s 2001 Nobel lecture on behalf of the United Nations:

Today’s real borders are not between nations, but between powerful and powerless, free and fettered, privileged and humiliated. Today, no walls can separate humanitarian or human rights crises in one part of the world from national security

crises in another. Scientists tell us that the world of nature is so small and interdependent that a butterfly flapping its wings in the Amazon rainforest can generate a violent storm on the other side of the earth. This principle is known as the “Butterfly Effect.” Today, we realize, perhaps more than ever, that the world of human activity also has its own “Butterfly Effect”—for better or for worse (Annan, 2001).

Nobel Peace Laureates are not selected for the power of their eloquent speech making. Rather, they are selected for the importance of their actions. Nevertheless, Nobel Peace Laureates deliver a Nobel lecture upon the now world-renowned occasion of the award ceremony. The speech ensuing from this forum has its own aesthetic and instrumental power and bears an important relationship to prior and future international peace work. Nobel lectures are worthy of attention by those interested in understanding how highly engaged political actors use language and rhetorical appeals to advance peace. Several Nobel lectures have been included in the volumes of *Vital Speeches of the Day*, a rhetorical index of significant historical and contemporary political speech. Moreover, included in their pioneering work *Diplomatic Discourse* in which Donahue and Prosser (1997) analyze the addresses of world leaders at the United Nations from a rhetorical perspective, three of the documented leaders speaking at the UN also received the Nobel Peace Prize at some point in their lives.

Such an important site of rhetorical *inventio* warrants scholarly investigation. Nobel Peace Laureates by right of a prestigious ceremonial tradition have the attention of an audience composed of members of diverse publics, including heads of state. Scholarly attention to Nobel peace speech has increased in the past decade. Yet, the norm has been for scholars to analyze a single speech artifact from a prestigious winner such as Mother Theresa (Kuseski, 1988); Liu Xiaobo (Hartnett, 2013); Barak Obama (Rhodes & Hlavacik, 2015); The Dalai Lama (Robinett, 2015); and Wangari Maathai (Kundai, 2016). Nevertheless, there is a gap in scholarly literature examining the rhetoric of Nobel Peace lectures as a genre. This essay aims to add to our knowledge of this understudied, yet powerful, discourse by answering the question: How does Nobel peace speech function as a rhetorical genre to induce actions and invoke values favorable to world peace?

An inductive analysis was performed using the following methodology. A purposive sample of Nobel lectures from the body of available Nobel lectures to date was selected. We analyzed an average of 50 Nobel lectures, ranging from Albert G. Schmedeman's speech on behalf of Thomas Woodrow Wilson in 1919 to the most recent laureate Juan Manuel Santos's lecture in 2016, with the greater emphasis placed on the last thirty years. We used a chronological rationale for focusing on Nobel lectures from the last thirty years. This purposive large-scale selection of recent speeches from the past several decades is based on the premise that this particular rhetorical genre of ceremonial award acceptance speech would reveal a kind of unfolding narrative cohesion. This is partly because historically earlier Nobel prize speeches would likely set a rhetorical precedent for later speeches. Also, Nobel Peace Prize winners share similar visions for world peace and as globalization pro-

cesses accelerate, their articulations of problems and solutions may become more convergent. In other words, over time, Nobel lectures from vastly different recipients might tell a similar story, even though the laureates come from diverse cultures and are engaged in diverse kinds of peace work. As Cobban (2000) has argued, the collaborative construction of a narrative for characterizing our “globewide human culture” may be wisely located from the Nobel peace laureate discursive community.¹

In this essay we argue that Nobel peace speech has been instrumental in forwarding a systematic articulation and reaffirmation of specific human values and political structures worldwide and has provided a rich vocabulary for the grammar of peace in western civilization and increasingly around the globe. The Nobel peace speech genre has achieved this heightened discursive ability through a series of highly appealing message characteristics. These discursive characteristics include: (1) recurrent situations and meaningful rhetorical action; (2) repetitive form; (3) a cluster of value appeals taken from the ideology of normative liberalism; and (4) consistent ideal hero enactment. In addition to this complex rhetoric, the Nobel Peace Prize tradition pursues institutional reification, which helps advance the practice, as well as the rhetoric, of peace. The rhetorical force of this genre of ceremonial speech revolves around the recurrent situation of humanity not living up to its creative and humanistic potential of peace and cooperation. The significance of this essay to communication theory is its contribution to our understanding of rhetoric’s role in the maintenance and development of an international and cross-cultural vocabulary for the grammar of peace.

¹ Alfred Nobel, founder of the well-known family of Nobel prizes, was a somewhat paradoxical figure to begin what has become the world’s most prestigious peace prize. This stems from the fact that Nobel was a scientific inventor most widely known for his invention of dynamite, which, among other things, has helped to advance technologies of death (Sejersted, 2001). Notwithstanding his unintentional advancement of the ease of organized killing, Nobel was widely considered a man of noteworthy moral character. According to Nobel’s will, the peace prize was to be awarded “by a committee of five persons to be elected by the Norwegian Storting” (Sejersted, 2001). Nobel’s decision to employ the Norwegian Storting’s services for the peace prize is interesting in that the other four prizes were to be awarded by committees of Swedish nationality—Nobel’s own ethnic background. The peace prize was to be awarded to the person who “shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity between nations, for the abolition or reduction of standing armies and for the holding of peace congresses” (Lundestad, 2001). Awarding the first prize in 1901 to two individuals—Frederic Passy and Henry Dunant—each engaged in very disparate kinds of peace work, established very broad parameters for what constituted Nobel worthy peace work. Frederic Passy was one of the main founders of the Interparliamentary Union and the main organizer of the Universal Peace Congress. Henry Dunant was the founder of the International Red Cross Movement. Since the first award in 1901 a number of categories of peace work with different causes, issues, and strategies, have been heir to the award: peace congresses, international judiciaries, humanitarian intervention/aid, disarmament, third party initiations of peaceful mediation, two party dialogic reconciliation between representatives of sovereign states in conflict, beneficent science, grassroots social movement leaders, and awards for human rights all have found their rightful place within the living tradition of the Nobel Peace Prize.

1. Recurrent situations and meaningful rhetorical action

Miller's (1984) concept of a rhetorical genre conceives of rhetoric as a high level of symbolic, pragmatic force or special kind of social action. Of particular interest to Miller is the perennially debated relationship between text and context. Which comes first? Does the exigency of a situation demand a rhetorical response or does rhetoric create situations, which are then perceived as exigent? For Miller, situations are social constructs that are based on definitions. Action, guided by meaning, is infused with interpretation. Thus, Miller advocates analysis of a rhetorical genre that is based on the relationship between recurring situations, social motives, and human action:

Exigence is a set of particular social patterns and expectations that provides a socially objectified motive for addressing danger, ignorance, separateness. It is an understanding of social need in which I know how to take an interest, in which one can intend to participate" (Miller, 1984).

If recurrent situations, such as the Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Ceremony, are constructed in the social world from originally private motives (such as Alfred Nobel's) then the key to grasping the meaning of a rhetorical genre is locating the exigency in a situation as defined by the individually motivated but socialized rhetor. Informed by Miller's conception of a rhetorical genre, there are in fact two kinds or classes of situations which function as a nexus of meaningful action and recurring situation that are of interest in this essay. They are: (1) the literal Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Ceremony and (2) the diverse existential situations that Nobel Peace Laureates describe as the context and motive for their work for which they were awarded the Nobel peace prize. These two situations—the pervasive absence of peace in the world and the Nobel Peace Prize tradition are interrelated in important ways.

Manifest evidence surrounding the discourse of Nobel peace speech demonstrates the utility of understanding these two kinds of situations as rhetorically constructed exigency based on a social motive to act in ways prescribed by the Nobel peace speech rhetors. Francis Sejersted, former Chairman of the Norwegian Nobel Committee instantiates why the rhetorical genre of Nobel peace speech can be interpreted within the generic rules which Miller proposes by identifying one of the Nobel Committee's criteria (read motives) for selection of a Nobel Peace Laureate: "The committee also takes the possible positive effects of its choices into account" (Sejersted, 2001). This statement provides evidence of the belief that perceived exigency, which often summons action, may be created with a symbolic event/tradition—rhetorical action. The former Secretary of the Nobel Committee corroborates this when he suggested that the committee hoped "that the Nobel Peace prize could not only award deeds done, but also provide an added incentive for

peace” (Lundestad, 2001).² Thus, there is a perceived exigency motivating social action through the recurring annual public ceremony of the Nobel Peace Prize. In addition, there is the inescapable fact that multitudinous kinds of real suffering abound due to the recurrent situation of humans not living up to their full potential to live and act cooperatively and harmoniously. This dismaying diversity of human suffering is itself a form of recurrent situation. Barak Obama alludes to this kind of situation in his 2009 Nobel Lecture: “And so I come here with an acute sense of the costs of armed conflict-filled with difficult questions about the relationship between war and peace, and our effort to replace one with the other. Now these questions are not new. War, in one form or another, appeared with the first man” (Obama, 2009). The Nobel Committee recognized the advantage to not circumscribing the definition of peace so the prize could be adaptive and flexible as new conditions and concerns for human wellbeing arise in the changing tides of history and culture.

There are numerous examples throughout the history of the Nobel Peace Prize tradition coupling these recurring situations, social motives, and human action. For instance, the situation of systematic denial of basic political freedoms for the citizens of Burma coincided with the mention of a U.N. resolution appealing for the release of the 1991 Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi during the 1991 Nobel lecture delivered by Aung San Suu Kyi’s son. Another moment of recurring situation and rhetorical action would be the international movement to secure peace and prevent annihilation of life on Earth by disarmament and repeated appeals for action via the auspices of Nobel lecture. As the 1985 Nobel Peace Laureate attests: “The enormous prestige of the Nobel Prize provides a unique opportunity for further mobilizing and educating a still larger public. Thus the reason for awarding the prize will be enhanced by receiving the prize” (International Physicians, 1985). In 2011 during her Nobel Lecture Tawakkol Karman said “Alfred Nobel’s dream of a world, where peace prevails and wars disappear, has not been achieved yet, but the hope of making it come true has grown large, and the effort to achieve it has doubled. The Nobel Peace Prize still offers this hope of spiritual and conscientious momentum” (Karman, 2011). One final example comes from John T. Casteen III, President of the University of Virginia. In 1998, the University and the Institute for Asian Democracy held a Nobel Peace Laureates Conference for several of the recent Nobel Peace Prize Laureates in an effort to discuss human rights, conflict, and reconciliation and to construct a Nobel Peace Laureate Joint Declaration. In his closing remarks of the Conference, Casteen III testified:

We must come to see ourselves as actors...by your examples and by your words, we may be able to determine how to make those things³ happen...so these may

² Exemplifying the potential of the Nobel Peace Prize to operate as a symbolic force to motivate social action is the fact that Ronald Reagan, former President of the United States, acted as if he had the conferral of the prize as a motivating factor for ending the Cold War (Donahue & Prosser, 1997).

³ When Casteen says “those things” he is referring to an exhortation to individual action; an obligation to make conscience manifest; increasing the fund of compassion in the world; acknowledging the humanity

be the charges that we take away from this place: to recognize our responsibility, but also our power, as individual persons to turn that recognition to fruitful action.

2. Repetitive form in Nobel peace speech

While similar formal qualities of a text may appear in quite different kinds of rhetorical action, a rhetorical genre is “a group of acts unified by a constellation of forms” (Campbell & Jamieson, 1979). In the previous section of this analysis we discussed how recurrent situations and rhetorical action help define Nobel peace speech as motivated by the perceived and constructed exigency for diverse kinds of human suffering. In this section of the analysis we outline the discursive strands that signify a formal pattern within Nobel peace speech to illustrate the many individual incarnations within a rhetorical genre that yet reveal an underlying structural pattern to the discourse as a corpus.

Burke’s *Counter-statement* articulates and codifies formal designs and devices of discourse. Burke (1968, p. 124) identified three dominant formal qualities that any discourse will potentially exhibit: (1) progressive form; (2) repetitive form; and (3) conventional form. Of the repetitive form, Burke suggests it “is the consistent maintaining of a principle under new guises. It is restatement of the same thing in different ways” in which “a character repeats his identity, his ‘number,’ under changing situations” (p. 125). The overriding formal quality of Nobel peace speeches is this discourse’s repetitive form.

Rigoberta Menchu Tum, a Quiche Indian Human Rights activist from Guatemala, provides an alluring example of repetitive form, when in her Nobel lecture she remarks: “Opinion is being formed everywhere today, that in spite of wars and violence, calls upon the entire human race to protect its historical values and to form unity in diversity” (Tum, 1992). While Tum uses the word “form” as a verb, Burke uses it as a noun. It is precisely “formal unity” of which Burke speaks when he expounds on repetitive form. It is the repetitiousness of formal unity in Nobel peace speech that uses its rhetorical action to reflect unity in the human race, in the deep desire to see it come to fruition. In other words, by modeling similar forms of speech in their acceptance speeches, the Nobel Laureates are modeling the unity they want humans to achieve in their existential relations.

Overcoming dissimilarities to focus on building bridges and having established recognition of a common humanity serve as repetitive features of the formal quality of these very messages. Herman Van Rompuy, the President of the European Council spoke on behalf of the European Union and expressed the eminence of this notion of concord almost explicitly, “But there is more that guides us: the will to remain

of mankind; making the gift of forgiveness; recognizing our responsibility and power; and interceding in the tired cycle of hatred and injustice (Hopkins, 2000).

masters of our own destiny, a sense of togetherness” (Rompuy, 2012). In his Nobel peace lecture Al Gore analogously articulated the same dire need for commonality, “When we unite for a moral purpose that is manifestly good and true, the spiritual energy can transform us” (Gore, 2007). Tawakkol Karman, one of the three female laureates to be awarded the Nobel peace prize in 2011 for her work as a women’s rights activist further exemplified this pattern of repetition during her lecture when she drew upon the key aspects of unity ascertained by way of a foundation of mutual respect and averred,

Despite all its missteps, humanity will go on in its march towards what is ‘beneficial to the people’ and will make different cultures, identities and specific characteristics of civilizations come closer to each other on the road towards positive convergence and interaction, both in taking and in giving. Thus, understanding will gradually replace dispute, cooperation will replace conflict, peace will replace war, and integration will replace division (Karman, 2011).

Reinforcing this commonality of the human species the majority of Nobel lectures appeal to inviolable human rights. It matters not whether the laureate was recognized for human rights work or some other kind of peace work, such as model statesmanship or humanitarian aid intervention. Laureates as diverse as the Dalai Lama, Mikhail Gorbachev, Kim Dae-jung, Martin Luther King Jr., and Dr. Oscar Arias Sanchez invoke the same principle, which has made its way to Laureate’s speeches through a long and distinguished rhetorical pilgrimage to the present and, as the ideologues of normative liberalism might hope, into the future. The excerpts from the following Nobel lectures have been selected to illustrate the recurring relation between form and content in Nobel peace speech. The argument embedded in the repetitive form of the discourse reveals the organizing principle for this genre—the belief in and appeal to inviolable universal human rights.

The 14th Dalai Lama, Nobel Peace Laureate, argues: “All of us human beings want freedom and the right to determine our own destiny as individuals and as peoples. That is human nature. The great changes that are taking place everywhere in the world, from Eastern Europe to Africa, are a clear indication of this” (Dalai Lama, 1989). Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, Nobel Peace Laureate, argues: “I would like to assure you that the leadership of the USSR is doing and will continue to do everything in its power to ensure that future developments in Europe, and the world as a whole are based on openness, mutual trust, international law and universal values” (Gorbachev, 1990). Kim Dae-jung, Nobel Peace Laureate, argues: “Buddhism rose to preach the supreme importance of one’s dignity and rights as a human being” (Dae-jung, 2000). Martin Luther King Jr., Nobel Peace Laureate, argues: Deeply etched in the fiber of our religious tradition is the conviction that men are made in the image of God and that they are souls of infinite metaphysical value, the heirs of a legacy of dignity and worth. If we feel this as a profound moral fact, we cannot be content to see men hungry, to see men victimized with starvation and ill health when we have the means to help them” (King, 1964). Dr. Oscar Arias Sanchez, Nobel

Peace Laureate, argues: “In Central America we do not seek solely peace, nor solely a peace to be followed on someday by political progress. Instead we seek peace and democracy together, indivisible: an end to the shedding of human blood which is inseparable from an end to the violation of human rights” (Sanchez, 1987).

From the self-determination to which the Dalai Lama appeals to the safeguard of international law which Mikhail Gorbachev legitimizes to the moral-religious grounding for human dignity, worth, moral facticity, and inviolable rights which Kim Dae-jung and the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. reference to Dr. Oscar Arias Sanchez's privileging of the democratic political structure which alone consistently apprehends the senseless violence as a violation of a human right is an indissoluble organizing principle for Nobel peace speech. It is this key organizing principle of a repetitive form(al) appeal to unity and inviolable universal human rights in which the orbiting molecules of Nobel peace speech cohere.

3. Value appeals in normative liberalism

The preferred ends of Nobel peace speeches legitimate a longstanding rhetoric in Western political philosophy—normative liberalism. Liberalism has celebrated a long and effective discursive legacy. According to humanistic scholars, “at the beginning of the third millennium the liberal appropriation of the political space appears increasingly complete” (Caler, Garrett, & Shannon, 2000). There are numerous strains of liberal thought that often create tension between proponents of different versions—particularly between normative liberalism and neo-liberalism (Richardson, 2001). Many of the peaceful international and transnational movements to restructure political, social, and economic institutions can be attributed in large degree to the rhetorical successes of a profoundly magnetic cluster of values within the normative liberal ideology. The most recent official inscription of this ideology is found in the United Nation's *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.⁴

Nobel peace speech is situated within and functions to advance rhetorical *topoi* of normative liberalism—universally inherent human rights of freedom and justice. We argue this by providing a historical sketch of the discursive roots of the rhetorical invention of inherent universal human rights and the intended political and moral arrangements to which the appeal to rights predisposes its audience.

⁴ The Declaration recognizes that the ‘inherent dignity of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world’ and is linked to the recognition of fundamental rights towards which every human being aspires, namely the right to life, liberty and security of person; the right to an adequate standard of living; the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution; the right to own property; the right to freedom of opinion and expression; the right to education, freedom of thought, conscience and religion; and the right to freedom from torture and degrading treatment, among others (Universal Declaration).

The legacy of normative liberalism can be traced back to a series of profoundly influential philosophical treatises on political theory.⁵ These philosophical touchstones in the classical tradition of Western political thought reveal an insight pertaining to the notion of the rhetorical genre. Rhetorical genres can be understood as historically emergent symbolic sets that, when fitting and persuasive, embed themselves in normative cultural standard setting through institutionalized ritual and ceremony. Black (1978) understood this connection when he goaded critics to approach discourse as “part of a historical process of argument.”

Nobel peace speech has pursued facets of normative liberalism regardless of the capriciousness of the circumstances laureates have embarked upon by incorporating a pattern of entreaties for freedom. In his 2010 Nobel peace lecture human rights activist Liu Xiaobo provided a prime paradigm when he asserted, “For there is no force that can put an end to the human quest for freedom” (Xiabo, 2010). Similarly children’s rights activist and Nobel peace laureate Kailash Satyarthi affirmed this same notion when he addressed the driving force behind his life’s work, “I refuse to accept that the shackles of slavery can ever be stronger than the quest for freedom” (Satyarthi, 2014). In 2015 Houcine Abassi, Secretary General of The Tunisian General Labour Union, Mohamed Fadhel Mahfoudh, President of the Tunisian Order of Lawyers, Abdessattar Ben Moussa, President of the Tunisian Human Rights League and Ouided Bouchamaoui, President of the Tunisian Confederation of Industry spoke on behalf of the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet, the year’s Nobel Peace laureates, and reflected on the potential freedom still possesses in modernity:

This historic occasion, which coincides with the anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is a tribute to the spirit of an inspiring revolution that the Tunisians led five years ago to protect their legitimate rights, to defend their freedom and dignity, a revolution in which all Tunisians shouted with one voice, ‘The people want’... ‘The people want the right to liberty’... ‘The people want the right to dignity’... ‘The people want the right to work. These slogans did have a magical impact. They inspired various peoples to rise up and claim their legitimate rights, and express their rejection of autocracy, injustice and oppression.

Furthermore, evidence suggests the same pattern manifests correspondingly in Nobel peace speech pertaining to appeals for justice. The peace prize’s most recent Laureate, The president of Columbia Juan Manuel Santos voiced the headway of this subject matter when he avowed, “We also achieved a very important objective: agreement on a model of transitional justice that enables us to secure a maximum of justice without sacrificing peace. I have no doubt this model will be one of the greatest legacies of the Colombian peace process” (Santos, 2016). Including this

⁵ Texts such as Plato’s *Republic* (Plato, 1995); Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* (Aristotle, 1995); John Stuart Mill’s *Utilitarianism* (Mill, 1864); John Locke’s *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Locke, 1997); Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan* (Hobbes, 1881); Immanuel Kant’s *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (Kant, 1997); and *Critique of Practical Reason* (Kant, 1997); and John Rawls’s *A Theory of Justice* (Rawls, 1971) all pursue public harmony by exploring the normative relationships between individuals and states.

same spirit of justice, former United States president Barrack Obama expressed in his 2008 lecture, “Our actions matter, and can bend history in the direction of justice” (Obama, 2008). Moreover, Liberian president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf illuminated the significance of the very same value, “What happens in one place is seen in every corner, and there has been no better time for the spread of peace, democracy and their attending social justice and fairness for all” (Sirleaf, 2011). Thus through Nobel peace speech, values including but not limited to freedom and justice advance normative liberalism and maintain significant import in the messages laureates strive to resonate with an increasingly global audience.

4. Consistent ideal hero enactment

In *Counter-Statement*, Burke (1968) argues that the capacity of a rhetorical form to produce effect is dependent on the text’s ideology. He then goes on to discuss the dependency between repetitive form and an ideal hero, or actor exemplar. The hero needs to be consistently the hero: “in every way, by the tenets of repetitive form, he will repeat the fact that he is a hero.” The analysis has already shown that repetitive form is the key organizing principle of Nobel peace speech. There also seems to cohere in this genre the connection between its repetitive form and the enactment of an ideal hero. According to Campbell (2004) the hero “ventures forth from the world of the common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man” (p. 28).

This heroic enactment finds itself often deployed in Nobel peace speech. Most Laureates seem to perceive that this hero ideal can be located within the prestige and purpose of the Nobel Peace Prize tradition. Another interesting characteristic evident in Nobel peace speech is the stylistic strategy by which Laureates perform their enactment of the ideal hero. Many Laureates perform this hero enactment through *ethos* as a humble, universal representative of humanity. According to Campbell (2004), the hero’s quest represents “the singleness of the human spirit in its aspirations, powers, vicissitudes, and wisdom” (p. 33).

In their speeches, most Laureates subtly undergo an enactment of this ideal universal human by accepting their prize with humility and gratitude but they accept it on behalf of those their cause is identified with. This enactment is revealed in the discourse by claiming that they are a representative of an organization, cause, or nation, and even all of human suffering. As with the repetitive formal strategy of appealing to inviolable, natural, inborn, and God-given rights, so too diverse rhetors in the Nobel peace speech genre enact a heroic, universal consubstantiation, identifying themselves with other Nobel Laureates and figuratively, with all of humanity. Herohood, according to Campbell (2004) carries with it *apotheosis*: the potential for the transcendence of duality and into a symbolic realm where the boundaries of individual selfhood fall away into selflessness and divine form is found and recollected.

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who still serves as the President of Liberia, accepted the prize with “great humility” and with ever expanding waves of selflessness “on behalf of all the women of Liberia, the women of Africa, and women everywhere in the world who have struggled for peace, justice, and equality” (Sirleaf, 2011). R.K. Pachauri, Chariman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), re-instantiated this rhetorical form when delivering his Nobel lecture on behalf of IPCC, “Coming as I do from India, a land which gave birth to civilization in ancient times and where much of the earlier tradition and wisdom guides actions even in modern times, the philosophy of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam”, which means the whole universe is one family, must dominate global efforts to protect the global commons” (Pachauri, 2007). As previously mentioned, Al Gore also won the prize in 2007 for his work with climate change. In his Nobel lecture he deploys subtle language resonant with the hero’s journey of separation, initiation, and return: “Unexpectedly, that quest has brought me here” (Gore, 2007). Lech Walesa, Nobel Peace Laureate enacts this universal hero ideal consubstantiation: “Let my words convey to you the joy and the never extinguished hope of the millions of my brothers—the millions of working people in factories and offices, associated in the union whose very name expresses one of the noblest aspirations of humanity. Today all of them, like myself, feel greatly honoured by the prize” (Walesa, 1983). David Trimble, Nobel Peace Co-Laureate enacts:

In one sense the singling of one or two persons, for a peace prize, must always seem something of an injustice...add to that the thousands of people who I do not know, but who have born witness, in their own lives, by carrying out what Wordsworth called, ‘those little nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and love.’ And since I know there are thousands of such heroes and heroines in Northern Ireland, how many more millions of peacemakers must there be in the front line of the fight for peace across the globe...but even if it is not possible to name them we can note their presence on the peace lines around the world (Trimble, 1998).

Dr. Oscar Arias Sanchez, Nobel Peace Laureate enacts: “I do not receive this prize as Oscar Arias. Nor do I receive it as President of my country. I lack the arrogance to claim to represent anyone or anything, but I do not fear the humility which identifies me with the great causes shared by all. I receive it as one of four hundred million Latin Americans” (Sanchez, 1987). Bernard Lown enacts on behalf of the Nobel Peace Laureate—International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War: “Dr. Chazov and I are filled with deep emotions of gratitude, of humility, and of pride as we accept this most prestigious prize on behalf of our movement...if we are to succeed in our goal of ridding military arsenals of instruments of genocide, we need the extraordinary energizing strength that comes when mind and heart are joined to serve humankind” (Lown, 1985).

Nelson Mandela, Nobel Peace Laureate enacts: “we stand here today as a representative of the millions of people across the globe” (Mandela, 1993). Muhammad Yunus, founder of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh enacts: “This years’ prize gives highest honour and dignity to the hundreds of millions of women all around the

world who struggle every day to make a living and bring hope for a better life for their children. This is a historic moment for them” (Yunus, 2006). In this way, Nobel peace speech rhetors perform a sophisticated enactment of the abstract principle of a consistent hero identity to which Burke calls our attention. In effect, this con-substantiates the Laureate with a grand swath of humanity. In the Nobel peace speech rhetorical genre, the ideal hero is consistently one who identifies or represents a certain portion of suffering humanity, and in the outward motion from one rhetor to thousands and millions of sufferers, the figurative consubstantiation with all of humanity takes hold. A consistent mold, once configured, can also set up rhetorical norms for future speakers to imitate/emulate, which may help to account for the consistent ideal hero enactment within Nobel peace speech.

In the next section of the analysis we argue that these discourse characteristics within Nobel peace speech have strong moral and political appeal that cuts across nations and cultures as manifested by widespread institutional reification goaded by the Nobel Peace Prize tradition.

5. Nobel peace speech and institutional reification

The establishment of the first Interparliamentary Union, founded in 1888, was the reason for designating the first Nobel Peace Prize to Frederick Passy in 1901. Sir William Cremer, an English labor leader, was instrumental in the establishment of The International Court of Arbitration at The Hague, founded in 1899, for which he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1903. Written into the Peace Settlement of World War II was the establishment of the League of Nations. Woodrow Wilson became the 23rd Nobel Peace Laureate in 1920 for his commitment and advocacy of the League. According to historians Winterle and Cramer (1971) there could have been no League of Nations established prior to the International Court at the Hague: “without that court and its work in laying the groundwork of international cooperation, there could have been no League of Nations.” We extend that argument analogically to claim that without the Interparliamentary Union, there could have been no International Court at The Hague. In 1945 Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin agreed on establishing the United Nations. Also in that year, The Nobel Laureate was named to be Cordell Hull, often called “the father of the U.N.” Cordell worked behind the scenes of official political action, constantly prodding those who could turn his incessant rhetorical action into a manifest political reality.

In 2007, the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) suggested that “Honouring the IPCC through the grant of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 in essence can be seen as a clarion call for the protection of the earth as it faces the widespread impacts of climate change.” The claim here is that now that the Nobel legacy has been bestowed upon those working on the front lines for mitigating the ill-effects of global warming, the rest of the world ought also to mobilize around this issue, politically, economically, socially, and religiously. The ideal hope is that the symbolic prestige of the Nobel Peace Prize has reifying power to

organize the will of the world. Furthermore, it is the tradition of the Nobel Lecture that functions as the reaffirming rhetorical action (Fisher, 1973). The symbol-substance association between Nobel peace speech, prior, and successive political reordering will continue to propagate universal humanism through its *dynamis* of symbolic form and material substance.

The point in synthesizing this rhetorical and political history is to demonstrate the close-knit tie between the Nobel Peace Prize tradition, Nobel peace speech as a rhetorical genre, and the developmental nature and growing international efficacy of the appeal to inborn universal rights, which has rhetorically spun into reality an entire network of legal instruments capable of profoundly re-membering the political structure of civic publics around the world to resemble the political structure of democracy long idealized in the Western tradition. Richardson (2001) argues that liberal rhetoric was at the doorstep of the establishment of both the League of Nations and the United Nations.

In this way, an extremely appealing and successful rhetorical genre such as Nobel peace speech, with its generic organizing principle as the repetitive form invoking Universal Human Rights, may be seen to operate in a self-reflexive fashion. Assuming our definition of “self” is based on a special ground broad enough to warrant inclusion of every individual human, the rhetoric promotes universal inclusion which then spurs individuals in diverse unjust circumstances all over the world to adopt this rhetoric and take specific actions.

Conclusion

As a rhetorical genre Nobel peace speech has been instrumental in forwarding a systematic structural reaffirmation and reorganization of human values and political structures around the globe. It has achieved this heightened rhetorical force in part through the genre’s series of highly appealing message characteristics. These discursive characteristics include: (1) recurrent situations and meaningful rhetorical action; (2) repetitive form; (3) a cluster of value appeals taken from the ideology of normative liberalism; and (4) consistent ideal hero enactment. Nobel peace speech has indeed grown out of the many recurring situations of tyranny, political abuse, human greed, and shortsightedness around the world. Nobel peace speech rhetors as well as the Nobel Committee conferring the prize monitor as well as construct exigency, and then deliver the cohesive rhetoric that hopes to propel meaningful unifying action. The genre’s rhetorical force comes through the fusion of its stylistic and substantive elements, revolving around the recurrent situation of humanity not living up to its creative and humanistic potential.

The Nobel peace speech genre’s appeal is in part constituted by an implied universal audience, the best imaginable (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969), which is timeless and placeless, includes you and I, and yet is very much historically and culturally situated. Nobel peace speech rhetoric effectively binds our actions to

what it means to be dignified qua humanity in relation to other humans and issues a moral exhortation in an effort to legitimate the universal values of freedom and justice. Yasser Arafat's Nobel Lecture (1994) exemplifies how the Nobel peace speech functions as rhetorical action that brings out the best in any audience willing to engage with its promulgation of peace:

I know, I know full well, Mr. Chairman, that this supreme and greatly significant prize was not awarded to me and to my partners: Mr. Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli Prime Minister, and Mr. Shimon Peres, the Foreign Minister, to crown an achievement: but as an encouragement to pursue a route with greater steps and deeper awareness, with truer intentions so that we may transform the peace option, the peace of the brave, from words into practice and reality and for us to be worthy of carrying forward the message entrusted to us by our peoples, as well as humanity and a universal moral duty.

One goal of criticism is to illuminate how culture imposes criteria for thinking and how rhetoric is molded, colored, shaped and constructed by prior rhetoric (Gronbeck & Jamieson, 1996). Nobel peace speech increasingly functions as an instrument to advance a cluster of appealing values within the normative liberal political ideology. Thus, the rhetorical-political dynamics identified in this essay may provide insight into how cultural value memes disseminate and mutate. As a precept of rhetorical theory, Nobel peace speech as a genre demonstrates critical self-reflexivity, contributes to the ongoing conversation of how we continually and instrumentally reconstitute praxis, indicates how institutionalized ceremonies operate in the larger milieu of historical ideological development, and documents an interesting constancy to human behavior, aimed at emulating peace as a symbolic substitute for the ever-elusive prospect of complete existential unity for the symbol-using animal.

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